

tion in ordinary flight with strokes of the wings, in which, indeed, the kite-like action of the spread of sail always comes jointly into play to a greater or less degree.

Granted, therefore, that the air-sacs to a certain extent assist respiratory activity, that is, in the case of birds, their main object will still be a mechanical one—the reduction of the specific gravity of the whole animal and the regulation of the specific gravity and the size of its parts, as well as of the position of the centre of gravity.

XV.—*Description of a new Snake from Sierra Leone.*

By G. A. BOULENGER, F.R.S.

*Aparallactus niger.*

Diameter of eye greater than its distance from the oral margin. Rostral much broader than deep, the portion visible from above one third as long as its distance from the frontal; internasals slightly broader than long, widely separated from the præocular; a single præfrontal, forming sutures with the nasal and præocular; frontal nearly once and a half as long as broad, as long as its distance from the end of the snout, much shorter than the parietals; nasal semidivided, in contact with the præocular; two postoculars; a single temporal; seven upper labials, third and fourth entering the eye, fifth and sixth in contact with the parietal; first lower labial in contact with its fellow behind the symphysial; anterior chin-shields longer than the posterior, in contact with four lower labials. Scales in 15 rows. Ventrals 164; anal entire; subcaudals 60. Uniform black above; ventrals white, edged with black; subcaudals black in the middle and on the posterior and outer borders.

Total length 335 millim.; tail 80.

A single male specimen in a small collection made by Mr. W. G. Clements in Sierra Leone.

The same collection contained a specimen (head and neck only) of *Naia Guentheri*, Blgr., the habitat of which was still unknown.